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## News Items

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[Jan. 11] Happy New Year; Time and Attendance; National Radon Action Month; Citizen Science; Talent Hub; Radon Test, Fix, Save a Life; Employee Talent Development Program Calendar; Free IT Training Webinars

by Fan, Shirley at 8:00 AM in [EPA Newsletter](#)



## Senior Leadership Message



Hi everyone,

Happy New Year! This is always a special time as we celebrate the end of one year and the start of another. And as we approach the end of this Administration, it is also a good time to reflect on all we have accomplished together.

During the Obama administration we have seen huge accomplishments for the American people, such as:

- Protected air which saves lives, and further addressed climate change;
- Worked together to protect our precious water resources;
- Took action to protect the public and workers from toxic chemicals;
- Made a visible difference in communities all across the country; and
- Enhanced our partnerships with local, state, tribal, and international leaders.

In just the last year, we at EPA:

- Set greenhouse gas standards for cars and trucks that slash carbon pollution and save people money at the pump;
- Defended the Clean Power Plan;
- Developed methane standards for landfills and new oil and gas production units — and are gathering data to set standards on existing ones;
- Helped broker two historic international agreements to lower carbon emissions from aircraft;
- Led the U.S. delegation that successfully amended an international agreement to reduce hydrofluorocarbons, a highly potent greenhouse gas; and
- Deepened our focus on the vulnerable communities that have been left behind.

And this is only scratching the surface of what our Agency does on a daily basis. I encourage you to read more about your successes in the [exit memo](#) Administrator McCarthy prepared for President Obama.

I am so proud of all the work you've done to better protect the public we are so privileged to serve. I think the Administrator says it best in her memo:

*"EPA's mission to protect public health and the environment—endures. This task is timeless, non-partisan, and essential to every single life. As we pass the baton, we are proud to have run our leg of the race with steadfast vigor, and left a healthier country and a stronger EPA."*

Sincerely,  
Matt Fritz  
Chief of Staff

## Hot Topics

[Changes to EPA's time and attendance reporting coming this year](#)

Last fall, the Office of the Chief Financial Officer (OCFO) issued a [memo](#) announcing two interrelated efforts that will improve the Agency's time and attendance system -- the PeoplePlus (PPL) Enhancement and Payroll Cost Allocation (PCA) projects. Together, these efforts will upgrade PPL, the Agency's time and attendance system, to the 9.2 software

version, and move the cost allocation process (the process by which the Agency charges payroll costs to the appropriate financial account) from PPL to Compass, the Agency's financial system. These projects are planned to launch in October 2017 and will improve the efficiency of EPA's time and attendance reporting, enhance security, and improve transparency for payroll reporting.

For the typical user, these projects will support all EPA schedules, including alternative work schedules like MaxiFlex, gliding schedule, variable week, 4/10, etc. The projects will also enable leave requests to appear on timecards in real-time, and allow the user to pull back unapproved leave slips.

As these projects progress, OCFO will continue to solicit and incorporate input and feedback from stakeholders and technical users across the Agency.

Updates and additional information, such as frequently asked questions, are available on the [PeoplePlus and Payroll Cost Allocation Projects Communications SharePoint](#) site. For questions, please contact PPL Enhancement Project Manager Dave Burkholder at [Burkholder.David@epa.gov](mailto:Burkholder.David@epa.gov), 202-564-2934, or PCA Project Manager Mitch Gray at [Gray.Mitch@epa.gov](mailto:Gray.Mitch@epa.gov), 919-541-3016.

## Test home radon level to protect your family

An estimated 21,000 Americans die every year from lung cancer due to radon exposure. There's only one way to know whether your home has an elevated radon level: test for it. If the radon level is four picocuries per liter (4 pCi/L) of air or more, the U.S. Surgeon General and EPA recommend taking action. With a test result of 4 pCi/L or more, you should contact a qualified radon mitigation contractor.

Exposure to radon in indoor air is the second leading cause of lung cancer. [EPA designates January as National Radon Action Month](#). Be sure to [test your home](#) and make 2017 a safer and healthier year.

To learn more about testing or obtaining a radon test kit, contact your state radon office at 1-800-SOS-RADON. Visit [EPA's Radon website](#) to find a qualified radon professional or to find information about the National Radon Action Plan partnership.

## Advisory council transmits citizen science report to EPA

The National Advisory Council for Environmental Policy and Technology (NACEPT) released a report in mid-December to the Agency highlighting the transformational potential of citizen science for environmental protection. NACEPT has assessed EPA's approach to citizen science in the context of current activities and recommends the Agency proactively and fully integrate citizen science into its work. The council urges EPA to embrace citizen science and capacity building initiatives that further advance its mission of protecting the environment and human health.

- Access the [NACEPT 2016 Report: Environmental Protection Belongs to the Public, A Vision for Citizen Science at EPA](#).
- Provide responses to the report to Eugene Green at [green.eugene@epa.gov](mailto:green.eugene@epa.gov) or Alison Parker at [parker.alison@epa.gov](mailto:parker.alison@epa.gov).
- View the [Citizen Science for Environmental Protection website](#).

## Have you made a New Year's resolution to enhance your career?

Visit [Talent Hub](#) to help plan for your future development at EPA.

Hundreds of applications have come in for posted opportunities since Talent Hub went live, and dozens of employees have been selected for details, temporary promotions or part-time Skills Marketplace projects. On average, over 250 individuals' interests match a new opportunity when posted. . . and that number is climbing!

The key to getting notified of new postings is to update your profile in [My Stuff](#), where you can specify the type of opportunity that you're most interested in and customize the work type, location, and pay grade that best meets your needs. Also, you can quickly find opportunities you've previously applied for or bookmarked, making it easy to manage your interests.

Check out the short Talent Hub [video](#) to get started. If you have any feedback or questions, connect with your Office or Regional [Points of Contact](#) or email the Talent Hub team through the website.

## Key Dates

### Happening This Week:

**Jan. 9:** [Information Session on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Pilot](#)

**Jan. 11:** [Webinar: How to Use Online CFRs](#)

**Jan. 12:** [Information Session on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Pilot](#)

## Coming Soon:

**Jan. 16:** Federal Holiday – Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

**Jan. 19:** [Webinar: How to Use Online CFRs](#)

## Video Spotlight

[Radon Test, Fix, Save a Life: Eddie's Story](#)

Lung cancer survivor Eddie Metcalf encourages people to know the facts about radon and to take action by testing, and when necessary, fixing their homes. Visit [epa.gov/radon](http://epa.gov/radon) for more information.

## Career Corner

[2017 Employee Talent Development Program calendar](#)

[EPA University](#) offers a number of eLearning and other development opportunities, including talent development courses and retirement seminars. Among the courses being offered in the near term are:

- [Project Management Essentials](#), Feb 15-16
- [Career Power for Managers](#), March 7
- [Retirement/Transition Seminars](#) (CSRS and FERS), various dates

Visit the [2017 calendar](#) page today to see the full schedule of training courses and seminars as well as the associated costs and registration deadlines. For questions contact Diana Kennedy at [kennedy.diana@epa.gov](mailto:kennedy.diana@epa.gov).

## IT Corner

[Free training webinars for EPA employees](#)

Visit the [IT Training Program SharePoint site](#) to view the [webinar calendar](#) and register for training sessions. All courses are available at no cost to employees, are one- to two-hours long, and are taught via Adobe Connect.

### January Webinars:

- Document Collaboration in SharePoint
- SharePoint Permissions Basics
- Skype for Business
- OneDrive
- Working with Your Team in SharePoint
- Advanced Accessibility for PDFs ... and more!

Employees can use [custom instructor-led training](#) for in-person classroom or virtual webinar training deliveries based around individual requirements. Instructors provide these classes at no extra cost dependent on their availability.

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